(b) if so, whether Government have any plan for such a facility being made available at other historical monuments?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It is proposed that this pilot project for IT application be made available at other historical monuments through ASI, State Governments and other competent organisations subject to necessary safeguards.

Competition in textile exports

*254. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA:
SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in the matter of textile exports stiff competition is posed by our neighbouring countries particularly China and Bangladesh;

(b) whether the Confederation of Indian Industry have made certain suggestions for strengthening international competitiveness in the field; and

(c) if so, the steps that have been taken by Government in the light of these suggestions and for exploiting the international market for its textile products in view of the stiff competition?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) had got a study conducted from an international consultant firm in 1999 on building India's competitiveness in textile sector. This and a few other studies have *inter-alia* emphasised the need for garment driven growth, modernisation and technological upgradation, human resource development, strategic alliances and investment to enable the industry to meet the international competition successfuly.

(c) Subsequent to the above studies, Government announced

National Textile Policy—2000 (NT×P-2000) to provide an enabling environment to make the domestic textile industry strong enough to face growing global competition and de-reserved the woven segment of readymade garment sector to allow the industry to achieve desired economies of scale. In order to implement promises and announcements under NT×P—2000, a "Textile Package" was announced in the Budget 2001-02 to encourage investment in the textile sector. Some of the important provisions of the "Textile Package" are:—

(i) Excise duty structure on textile items has been generally rationalized to achieve growth and maximum value addition.

(ii) Customs duty has been reduced from 15% to 5% on 159 specified textile and garment machineries. In addition, 12 important items of machineries including shuttleless looms have also been exempted from countervailing duty. A programme has been announced to induct 50,000 shuttleless looms and to modernise 2.5 lakh powerlooms in the decentralised sector by 2004.

(iii) Asstistance under Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) providing for a reimbursement of 5% out of interest is available to textile industry for modernisation and upgradation. In addition, rate of depreciation allowance for machinery under TUFS has been raised to 50%.

(iv) A provision of Rs. 10 crores has been earmarked in the Budget 2001-02 for establishment of Apparel Parks for production and export of garments. Besides a provision of Rs. 15 crores has been made for the scheme for improvement of critical infrastructure facilities at major textile production centres.